



Testimony of Connecticut Fund for the Environment,  
and its bi-state program Save the Sound, before the  
Government Administration and Elections Committee  
March 2, 2015



**In opposition to sections 1 & 2 of H.B. No. 6842 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE BUDGET  
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GOVERNOR CONCERNING GENERAL GOVERNMENT.**

*Connecticut Fund for the Environment ("CFE") is a non-profit environmental organization with over 5,500 members statewide. The mission of CFE, and its bi-state program Save the Sound, is to protect and improve the land, air, and water of Connecticut and Long Island Sound. We use legal and scientific expertise and bring people together to achieve results that benefit our environment for current and future generations.*

Dear Sen. Cassano, Rep. Jutila, and members of the Committee:

Connecticut Fund for the Environment, and its bi-state program Save the Sound submits this testimony in opposition to sections 1 & 2 of H.B. No. 6842 An Act Implementing the Budget Recommendations of the Governor Concerning General Government. If passed, these sections would move the Council on Environmental Quality ("CEQ") from the Department of Energy and Environment ("DEEP") to the Joint Committee on Legislative Management ("LM").

DEEP, not LM, is the most logical housing agent for CEQ. LM's responsibilities include 1) conducting the business affairs of the General Assembly; 2) being responsible for the operation of the General Assembly; 3) coordinating and supervising committee work; 4) improving legislative operations; 5) deciding on matters of organization, procedures, facilities and working conditions of the General Assembly and compensation of employees of the legislative branch; and 6) generally overseeing legislative task forces and studies. Conversely, CEQ's responsibilities include 1) assessing the condition of Connecticut's environment; 2) reporting findings annually to the Governor; 3) recommending actions to improve state environmental programs; 4) advising other state agencies on the environmental impacts of proposed construction projects; 5) investigating citizens' complaints and allegations of violations of environmental laws; 6) reviewing Environmental Impact Evaluations that state agencies develop for major projects; and 7) publishing the Environmental Monitor, the official website for state project information under CEPA and for notices of proposed sale or transfer of state-owned lands. There is no nexus between the purposes of LM and the duties of CEQ.

The watchdog of the DEEP, CEQ independently reports on the status of Connecticut's environment and pays particular attention to citizen concerns. CEQ is also one of the most efficient of state organizations, with only two staff and an annual budget of just \$180,000. A repeated target for elimination since 2003, CEQ demise has been prevented over several budget cycles—after recognition by legislators of its tremendous value to the state's citizens and our natural resources. We ask you to save CEQ once again this year.

We thank you for your time and the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Leah Lopez Schmalz".

Leah Lopez Schmalz  
Program Director  
Connecticut Fund for the Environment,  
and its bi-state program Save the Sound  
142 Temple Street, Suite 305  
New Haven, CT 06510  
203.787.0646 ext. 121; 203.787.0246 fax  
[www.ctenvironment.org](http://www.ctenvironment.org)